



Cork Centre for Independent Living Limited  
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## COVID – 19

### SERVICE USER INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

Date	Review	Mgt. Lead	BOM Lead
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## COVID – 19

# SERVICE USER INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

### Introduction

The risk of catching coronavirus in Ireland is described as low to moderate. This may change. At the moment most people may continue to go to work, school and other public places, as usual. The Department of Health and the HSE update advice and information daily. Please visit these websites to keep yourself informed [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) / [www.ecdc.eu](http://www.ecdc.europa.eu) / [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

At the moment Cork CIL services are operating as normal but this will change if the Covid-19 status changes. We have published our *Covid-19 Business Continuity Management Plan*. This is guided by the HSE and outlines what we will do to keep essential service running. This will be updated as required and is available on our website.

We have written to **ALL STAFF** reminding them of their responsibilities to work safely and instructing them to step up their infection control practices. We post staff updates regularly on the Cork CIL website.

This information and guideline are for **ALL SERVICE USERS** . It refers to the HSE advise that applies to everyone. It is important that you read this advice in full. It also explains what you need to do to help us maintain a safe Cork CIL PA service.

This following information is to help you to help us.

### **Public Health Advice - Protect Yourself from Novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV**

The key message is that we must all protect ourselves and reduce our risk from Novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV. This includes regular, thorough handwashing, and coughing/sneezing containment.

### **Cough and Sneeze Containment**

When you cough or sneeze always:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue and dispose of tissue in a closed bin, then wash your hands or use hand sanitiser or alcohol hand rub
- Throw the tissue into a covered waste bin. If you do not have a tissue sneeze into the bend of your elbow



- Alternatively, cover your mouth and nose with your flexed (bent) elbow
- Clean hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water after coughing or sneezing

## Hand Washing

When to wash your hands:

- After coughing or sneezing
- After toilet use
- Before eating
- Before and after preparing food
- If you are in contact with a sick person, especially those with respiratory symptoms
- If your hands are dirty
- If you have petted or handled animals or handled animal waste

How to wash your hands:

- Wet your hands with warm water and apply soap
- Rub your hands together until the soap forms a lather
- Rub the top of your hands, between your fingers and under your fingernails
- Make sure you wash all parts of your hands including palms, thumbs, backs of fingers
- Do this for at least 20 seconds
- Rinse your hands under running water
- Dry your hands with a clean towel or paper towel

Watch the guidance video on HSE website <https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

Keep your hands in good condition, moisturise them often. Any basic product that is not perfumed or coloured is ok.

Do not wear gloves instead of washing your hands. The virus gets on them in the same way it gets on your hands. Also, your hands can get contaminated when you take them off.



### **Working with your PA's**

As a Service User you need to work with us to help to protect your PA's and others who assist you with essential activities every day;

Remind your PA's or others who may come to your home to:

- wash their hands when they arrive, before and after any assistance, they give you
- observe cough and sneeze etiquette too

### **Home Hygiene**

Keep your home and personal environment as clean as possible and

- clean more often the high touch areas in your home like door handles, toilet flushes, your spectacles, the TV remote etc . If you use a wheelchair remember the control buttons
- make sure that your PA's or others do not use your personal towel or your tea towels to dry their hands. If possible, provide soap and kitchen roll. If you cannot do this not tell your PA and we will see if we can help
- If you need help to keep important areas of your home clean talk to us

### **Look after yourself and be prepared**

- Get a supply of any regular essential medicines that you use from your doctor or pharmacy
- When out and about avoid busy places and close contact with other people
- Check that you have up to date contact details for the important people in your life
- Know where if needed you can get support in the event of your PA service being interrupted.

### **Closure of Services**

There is always the possibility that offices, day centres and schools may close. This will put additional pressure on PA community services and staff who work for these services. If you are affected by a service closure, please call 021 43226514 and speak with your Co-ordinator . If we can support, you even in the short term we will.



**IF YOU OR [SOMEONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD] BECOMES UNWELL WITH A RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS OR OTHER VIRAL ILLNESS**

1. **Stay Home - DO NOT** present at your GP surgery or A&E. Call your GP for advice . If you do not have a GP, phone 112 or 999.
2. If instructed to self-isolate go to the HSE website for detailed guidelines on protecting yourself and the people you live with. If you need help with this call us
3. **Call the Cork CIL office 021-432-2651**. Speak with a member of CIL Office staff straight away so we can act to reduce risk to staff and other service users

If you have been in an affected area or are concerned that you may have been in contact with someone unwell the current HSE advice is on the website [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) and copied in Appendix 1. This is regularly updated.

**Information & Misinformation**

There is unfortunately a lot of misinformation in social media and on the web. Keep yourself informed with advice from HSE, ECDC & WHO [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) / [www.ecdc.eu](http://www.ecdc.eu) / [www.who.ie](http://www.who.ie) who are providing good up to date information. As the situation changes this is reviewed and amended. It is important that this is the source of your information

**What happens If a Service User is Affected by Covid-19 ?**

If a Service User is affected in that they are instructed to self-isolate or becomes unwell with Covid-19 this a Public Health issue and you **MUST INFORM US IMMEDIATELY**

*Cork CIL will take direct instruction from the Department of Public Health / HSE on how to proceed. It is essential that we must work to ensure staff and service user safety and reduce the risk of onward community transmission*

**Staff who are Concerned about the Health of a Service User or Person in their Household**

If any employee is concerned about the health of a service user or other in their household in this regard, they will request that the Service User to take appropriate health/ medical advice and speak with their co-ordinator straight away. Out of hours they will call 086 7929684. We must act in best interest of all service users and staff safety.



## **Reducing Risk**

Cork CIL will follow the Dept Health & HSE Advice Employees who have Travelled to areas affected by Covid-19 and/or have been in contact with individuals who are at risk of or have Covid-19.

Employees who have travelled to areas affected by Covid-19 and employees who have been in contact with individuals who have Covid-19 or indeed any virus of special concern should follow the Health Protection Surveillance Centre guidance for advice in the first instance and then notify Cork CIL before attending for work.

If employees are instructed to self-isolate this will result in a reduced staffing capacity and services will be impacted

## **Service User Concerns about Staff they believe may represent an increased risk.**

A number of Service Users or their family will have concerns about some employees coming into their home. This may be because of the employees travel history, their contact with others who have travelled abroad or if they believe that the employee may have been in contact with Covid-19

A high proportion of Cork CIL Service Users are potentially at an increased risk and health wise fall into a vulnerable category. We understand that Service Users may choose to cancel services or named staff if they believe they represent an increased risk.

If a Service User **DOES NOT** want PA's to work with them because of concerns Cork CIL will:

- Respect service user's decision
- Each service will be considered on an individual basis and assessed against the HSE categories.
- Cover, if available **will only be provided for essential services**. Cover may not be at the original scheduled time

## **Employees who fail to attend for work for fear of catching a virus**

If an employee is absent due to a fear of contracting the virus Cork CIL will consider the risks and consider whether the employee is a 'vulnerable' employee.

Where there is no increased risk for the employee, Cork CIL will request them to attend work. An employee who continues to be absent from work in these circumstances may be subject to disciplinary action for unauthorised absence.



### **Interruption to PA services into Congregated Settings including hospital**

Some residential centres, hospital and day centres are closed to visitors. Cork CIL must abide by this decision. If a PA scheduled to work with a Service User can meet the Service User at the door of their residence or centre and go out, we will aim to facilitate this whilst we can do so safely. If this is not possible staff will be given cancellation notice and redeployed

### **Increase in PA Service Demand**

If centre based and other congregated settings close there may be an increase demand for PA supports. If this happens please contact Cork CIL Co-ordinators. We will try and respond to essential requests but cannot guarantee this

### **Application for New Services**

Cork CIL will not process applications for new or augmented long term services at this time

### **Reduction in Staff**

If we experience a reduction in staff availability it likely that other service providers will also be challenged. Cork CIL will review the services and prioritise essential personal care supports in the first instance for Service User with no other services or supports in the community. More details are available in the [Cork CIL Covid-19 Business Continuity Management Plan](#)

At the moment Cork CIL services are operating as normal but this will change if the Covid-19 status changes. This will be guided by the HSE and our responses will change as required and as instructed by the State

### **Summary**

- It is important that we keep up to date with the best HSE advice
- Maintain good infection control, hand hygiene and cough etiquette
- Avoid myth and misinformation
- Act sensibly and safely.
- If you have questions, ask



## Appendix 1- HSE Advice

### Remember Advice is changed and updated regularly keep informed

If you have been in an affected area or are concerned that you may have been in contact with someone unwell the current HSE advice is on the website [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) and copied in appendix 1. is as follows:

#### If you are feeling well

If you are feeling well, **carry on with your normal routine.**

- Follow the [advice on how to protect yourself from coronavirus](#) and other infections e.g. [flu](#), [or winter vomiting bug](#)
- Avoid spending time with people who are ill with a cough, elevated temperature, or breathing problems.
- If you develop any [symptoms of coronavirus](#):
  - avoid contact with people by [self-isolating](#)
  - phone your GP or emergency department. If you do not have a GP, phone [112](#) or [999](#).
  - tell them your symptoms and the details of your situation

#### If you think you have been in contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus

- **Contact HSELive on [1850 24 1850](#)** if you think you have been:
  - In contact with someone confirmed as having coronavirus
  - To a healthcare facility in another country where coronavirus patients are being treated
  - If you develop [symptoms of coronavirus](#), avoid contact with people by [self-isolating](#) and phone your GP or emergency department.

**Do not go to your GP or ED. Phone them first. If you do not have a GP, phone [112](#) or [999](#).** You will be put in contact with your local Department of Public Health staff who will give you information and advice.

If an employee becomes unwell with a respiratory symptoms or other viral illness they have been instructed as follows [more detailed information and links available on website staff portal]

1. **NOT** to come to work- Stay Home
2. **NOT TO** present at their GP surgery or A&E. but call GP for advice or phone [112](#) or [999](#).
3. If instructed to self-isolate they are directed to the HSE website for detailed guidelines on protecting yourself and the people you live with.
4. They must call the Cork CIL office 021-432-2651. Speak with a member of CIL Office staff
5. The current staff **Sick Leave Policy** will apply.